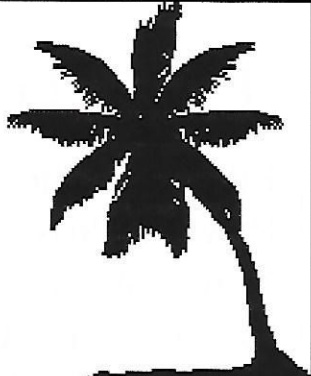
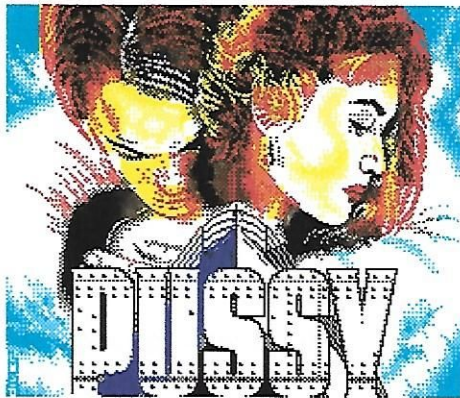
	<h1>Desert Island Disks</h1> <p>Issue 7</p> <p>January 2001    Price: £2</p>	
<p>The Fanzine that takes Speccy games seriously.</p>		



*New game coming for the Spectrum soon:*  
***Pussy - The love story from Titanic***  
**MEGA Preview in this issue.**

Booty author  
**John F. Cain**  
 interviewed.

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 Speccy Tour 2000  
 winner Bitz tells us  
 which games he would  
 take along to a  
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Plus  
**Pokeworld, News and  
 the Editorial.**

**Spectra:**  
 Competition, Top 10, Crap Games,  
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**John McIntosh  
 reviews  
 Gryzor.**

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**Next issue will be available (hopefully) May 2001. If you want to order a copy, then follow these instructions.**

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If you have any comments on the mag, please let us know.

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## Editorial - The Editor Speaks Up.

Let me start this editorial by telling you all that I've just received a Demo version of Maria vs. some Bastards from Manic Miner Technologies (thanks Andy). If you've read the last issue of DID you'll know that it is the follow up to MMT's huge game Eugene - Lord of the Bathroom. Typically this Demo arrived too late for me to preview it in this issue. Let's hope that we can review the finished game in the next issue of DID.

But no reason to be sad, there are a lot of interesting things in this issue if you ask me. A mega preview, an interview with one of my Speccy heroes and stuff like Spectra and Pokeworld. You also, get the FREE Speccy Tour 2000 booklet and that new Net Talk column. What more can you ask?

Do any of you DID readers also read the German fanzine SPC? Their Christmas edition came with a cover CD. Really nice Wolfgang, keep up the good work.

Below, you'll find the very first preview in DID, I hope you all like it as it is a bit different to the normal reviews because I end it by giving some facts not really connected to the game itself, but more to the theme on which the game is based. What do you think about that?

As you'll read on the news page, AlchNews has gone paperbased and I would like to wish Andy Davies luck in that project.

For the first time ever I had to cut out an article because there wasn't enough space for it. This really proves that the support is growing and that's great. Not only is it growing, but it is getting better and better. Thank you, to everyone who helped with this issue.

MEGA PREVIEW — MEGA PREVIEW — MEGA PREVIEW — MEGA PREVIEW

<p>Game: Pussy          Company: LCD Design          Author: Fatality          Release Date: January 2001          Type: Puzzle          Joystick: Sinclair &amp; Kempston          Machine: 128K</p>	<p><b>Graphics</b>      ■■■■■■■■■■□□8  <b>Sound</b>            ■■■■■■■■■■10  <b>Playability</b>     ■■■■■■■■■■□□J8/K8  <b>Addictiveness</b> ■■■■■■■■■■□9  <b>Overall</b>          ■■■■■■■■■■□9</p>
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Available on: **Tape 20,- DM / MB02 10,- DM / +D 10,- DM**  
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There haven't been that many new games released since the first issue of DID. The only game so far that really made us rave was Eugene: Lord of the Bathroom from Manic Miner Technologies. But now, there's a new game on the way, that looks to be better and more interesting than Eugene. Why? Because it's not just another Willy game. It's a puzzle game, that reminds me a little bit about Solomon's Key from U.S.Gold.



Leszek Chmielewski Daniel from LCD Design was kind enough to send me a beta version of the game, so that I could make this preview. Leszek sent me a 761kb TAP file to use on emulators. This means that the game is so big that it will be released on two 60 minute tapes. There are tons of levels to think your way through, so, you won't complete this game for the first few weeks. Leszek

also told me that he plans to make a +D version for those who don't want to pay that much for the game. They will get a packed version on +D discs, that will restore itself to tape.

Now let's take a look at the game.

The full title of the game is Pussy: The love story from Titanic. The game is based on the monster movie hit Titanic featuring Leonardo DiCaprio and the lovely Kate Winslet. However, the action doesn't take place on the Titanic and the game doesn't feature either Jack or Rose from the movie. You control Leonardo and the game is played on land.

The loading screen (see frontpage) and the end of game graphics are taken from the movie, but the characters in the game don't look like Leonardo or Kate at all. I don't think that it was the idea in the first place to connect the game with the movie, but this came later.

On each level there's a complex of blocks, ladders and dangerous blocks / enemies. You'll have to fight your way to Kate by eliminating blocks that keeps you from her. But watch out, there's a lot of dangerous things to look out for. First of all there are all the enemies in shape of Bees and Moles. You lose a life if they catch you or Kate. Then there are the red blocks which means instant death if you fall down on them. You also have to think hard before every move as smashing a wrong block could be fatal. Look at the screen to the right and you'll see what happens if you smash the wrong block. The problem is that Kate can't jump down or climb up blocks, so if there aren't any blocks to the left or right of her, she'll stay on her block and wait for you to rescue her. But as you can see, there's no way you can rescue her from this situation.



**Kate is crying for help and you can't do anything, as you can't destroy the Magenta block she is staying on.**

It's hard to explain games like this, but imagine that you have a pile of blocks and Kate runs along on top of these piles. You can now smash those blocks, making the piles smaller and smaller, meaning that Kate is getting closer and closer to you at the bottom. Then when she reaches you and you are united with her, the level is completed. Now it's only the first level, which is as simple as this. On the next levels you'll have to climb ladders, and plan in which order to smash the blocks, otherwise you're stuck and have to press 'H' to give up. The result is that you lose a life and you'll have to start all over again on that level.

The scoring system is a bit boring. You get 100 points for smashing a red block and 1000 points for getting a mole to fall onto one of those. You might get points for more than this, but it doesn't change the fact that the scoring system is a bit static. When you get the feeling of the game and you start to become good at it, you'll solve the levels the same way over and over, meaning that you'll end up with a score very similar to the score in the previous game, where you got to that level. I believe that a timer, that would give you bonus points, regarding on how fast you solved the level, would have done the trick. But that's the only downer in the game, as the most important thing in games like this is which level you reached. Right?

You start the game with 6 lives, but you can collect extra lives during the game. Those extra lives comes out of some of the blocks you destroy, as does a type of explosive that kills Kate when she runs into it. So, watch out for this, and act fast when one of those appears and Kate is running directly towards it.

There's also doors that teleports you from place to place, which is very useful. There's

probably a lot more that I couldn't explore before I had to finish this preview, so you are in for a real think and explore game here.

Pussy is a very good game with great music and some beautiful graphics, like those end of game screens. I can't really think of any Puzzle game of this kind for the Speccy which is better than Pussy.

It doesn't matter if you collect Spectrum software or not, if you like playing games on the Speccy you should really buy this master piece. I hope it will become a success as Leszek plans to release more games if it does, and that is the future of the Speccy. We can't keep up with all those Willy games and why play remakes of Speccy games on your PC or Amiga, when you can play a totally new game on your beloved Spectrum. Now, support the scene and buy this monster game.

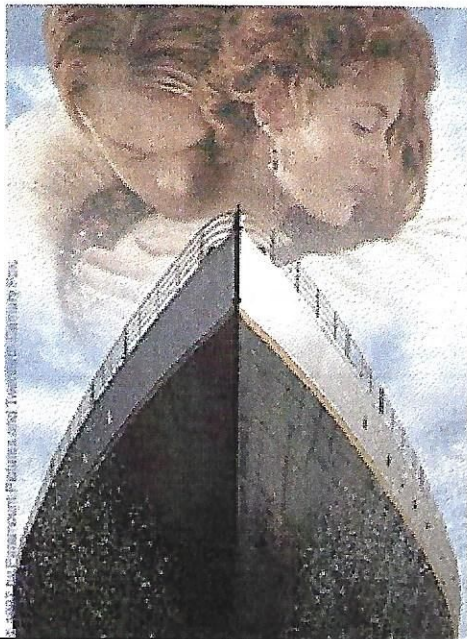
I look forward to spend my money on it, and seeing the package and instruction that comes along. I just hope there'll be a nice piccy of Kate included. I can't wait.

*Michael Bruhn*

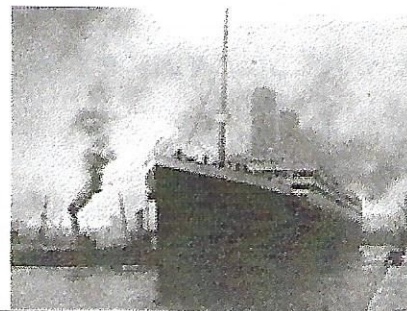


... YOU COULDN'T PROVE  
GIVE TO MR. LEONARDO !

**One of the amazing end of game screens.**



**Titanic the Movie**  
**Year:** 1997  
**Director:** James Cameron  
**Starring:** Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet & Billy Zane.  
**Genre:** Drama / Romance  
**Estimated budget:** \$200 Millions  
**Worldwide gross:** \$1,835 Millions  
**Information:** Titanic is the most successful movie of all time.



**RMS Titanic the Ship**  
**Flag of Registry:** British  
**Shipbuilding Company:** Harland & Wolff  
**Chief Designer:** Thomas Andrews  
**Launch Date:** 31st May 1911  
**Length:** 882.75 feet  
**Width (beam):** 92.5 feet  
**Height (keel to top of funnels):** 175 feet  
**Weight:** 46.328 tons  
**Decks:** 9  
**Crew:** 800  
**Passengers:** 2.500  
**Costs:** £1.500.000  
**Top speed:** 22.5 knots  
**Lifeboat capacity:** 1.178 people  
**Wreck's depth:** 12.460 feet  
**Information:** First Ocean liner to have a swimming pool and a gym.

## NEWS

### The end of Crashed.

The sad news about the end of Crashed came too late to be included in the last issue. Dave Fountain the editor sent out this comment in an E-mail:

**'I've taken the decision to cease production. This is due to a new job, a new house, a new location etc. and it's just not possible to donate the time and resources as I used to. The kitty is empty again, it's just not working as it should, which is a shame as I enjoyed it.'**

Dave was kind enough to send out the last unreleased issue to a bunch of people through E-mails. Another smashing issue, just a shame it wasn't released on paper.

Thank you for your huge effort during the years Dave. Let's hope that Crashed will rise again in some form.

### *Sonic delayed.*

The main programmer behind Sonic ZX, Andrew Owen, left for Australia for 12 month at the beginning of October. This means that he won't have the time to continue his work on the game before he gets back to England.

So, don't count on seeing the game until sometime year 2002.

### WinQuill.

Create your own adventures on your PC, by using this Windows version of the old Spectrum Adventure creating tool, The Quill.

Nigel Arnold is the man behind this project and besides letting you create games it also allows you to import all the Spectrum games written with The Quill.

For more information and to download the newest version of WinQuill go here:

<http://www.winquill.co.uk/>

### New Jet Set Willy games.

Monstrum - S.J. Hill - 2000 \*

Bulgarian Requiem - Adban De Corcy - 2000 \*

JSW 1-1 - Nick - 2000 \*\*

Time Hole Special Edition - Edward Martland - 2000 \*\*\*

Where's Woody (128K) - Sedy aka Alex Cornhill \*

\* <http://jswremakes.emuunlim.com/>

\*\* <http://www.aldridge98.fsnet.co.uk/jsw1-1.html>

\*\*\* <http://www.cs.man.ac.uk/~broada/spectrum/>

### AlchNews gone paper.

The good old AlchNews has gone paper, renaming itself to Z88 User. In other words, Andy Davis has taken over Z88 User and has made it an allround fanzine, which covers the Spectrum, Z88 and Emulators. We'll review it here in DID when more issues have been released, but I can tell you that the first issue, Z88 User (issue 7) / AlchNews (issue 33) includes a guide to all Speccy clones ever made and the Z88 version of Jet Set Willy has been hacked off. Check it out.

### The Speccy Catches On.

Copy your Spectrum tapes onto CD

£2 + 10p for each track + postage

Send SAE to address below for more details:

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## John F. Cain

### Interviewed by Michael Bruhn

With the help of Jonathan McCormack I got in touch with John F. Cain, the author of one of my favourite Speccy games, *Booty*. No doubt that I had to interview him, and the following was what came out of it. A big thank you to both John and Jonathan. Here we go.

#### **How old are you?**

I'm 46 now and was about 30 when I wrote *Booty*.

#### **What does the F in your name stand for?**

I'm not saying! I always use "John F. Cain" because my parents had very little imagination when it came to naming their children - my father's name was John Cain too, so I always used the "F" so we knew whose mail was whose!

#### **What music do you like?**

I used to be a Queen fan, but listen to more or less anything these days.

#### **Any favourite movies?**

Anything by Ray Harryhausen, particularly "Jason and the Argonauts". I also thought "Back to the Future" was brilliant.

#### **Favourite sport?**

Anything that doesn't require physical effort! I HATE football, cricket and most team games. I don't play any sports but used to play snooker a bit.

#### **What is your favourite Spectrum game of all time?**

A very difficult question! When I was programming software companies used to send me boxes of current games and new releases so that I could keep in touch with current standards and see what everyone else was producing. If I had played them all I would never have got any work done! At the time the "Ultimate" games were quite innovational in that they were one of the first to use characters that moved a pixel at a time rather than a full character square. I also liked "Subsunk" a mainly text adventure game (by Firebird I think) - I like adventure games and this is one of the few that I have managed to play all the way through without cheating! The game is full of clues as to what to do next and is very clever. I also liked "Ant attack" and "Bugaboo" which seemed very well programmed.

#### **Have you ever completed *Booty* without cheating?**

No, I very much doubt it! It is far easier to write cheats into games to test them. I THINK that the cheat for *Booty* was to poke 65535 with 10 (decimal) before loading the game. The game used to fill all the available memory except the last byte when it loaded although it may be that Firebird changed this when they produced the cassette. I'd be interested to know if this still works as I have never seen it in print.

**For me *Booty* was your best game and it would probably make it into a top 5 of my favourite Firebird games, but it had one little fault, which was that you would return to the starting screen every time you died. Why did you decide to do that?**

Probably ease of programming! (Although I can't really remember if this was a conscious decision.) If you were killed by a pirate and started your next life at the same position then it was likely that the same pirate would instantly kill you again!

*At this point John stopped answering my questions and started to talk about this and that. Enjoy.*

I live in the Isle of Man, a small island in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland with a population of about 75000. When I left school I started work in an Architects office, drawing plans for extensions and new buildings. While I was there the office bought a Commodore PET which I seldom had the chance to use as it was supposed to be for office use and was shared between about 40 people. When the ZX80 came out I bought one (in kit form) and had great fun typing in programs from magazines. In about 1979 a client that I had been working for offered me a ridiculously high salary to work for him in the drawing office of an electrical engineering company that he was setting up on the island. This company was supposed to produce computer controlled vending equipment.

Unfortunately, the company produced very little, but spent a fortune on "research and development". All the staff were very well paid, but with no money coming in, the company closed down after about a year and a half.

There wasn't actually enough drawing work for me to be kept busy all the time, and I used to fill a lot of "spare" time assembling circuit boards, writing instruction manuals for the few machines that we did produce and chatting to the computer engineers that worked there. This gave me my first insight into machine code programming when someone explained in simple terms how it was done. (Well, in 6502 processors anyway!)

I soon acquired a Zilog Z80 programming manual and started writing simple routines to move a dot around the Spectrum screen.

When the company folded, I was briefly employed by a company which sold Commodore 64s, games and possibly one of the first "notebooks" the Epson HX20. There wasn't a simple manual for the HX20 and the owner of the company thought he would sell more if people could learn to program it themselves, so I was taken on to write a programming manual for it.

Fortunately, as it turned out, we received a batch of new games from Rabbit software. One contained a "bug" which prevented you from completing the game. To avoid Rabbit producing hundreds of defective copies, I phoned them to tell them about it, and also asked if they would be interested in me converting some of their titles to work on the Spectrum.

They were very interested, sent me some games to look at and about a week later, I sent them a Spectrum version of "Quackers" - (Which looking back was dreadful!) - But they loved it, and asked me to produce more.

Rabbit was probably one of the first games software companies and I've no idea why they were called Rabbit. - They used to produce Commodore 64 and Vic 20 games under licence from America. With the Spectrum fast becoming the UK's most popular machine they were delighted to be able to supply Spectrum titles. They signed me up to produce 20 games for them on the Spectrum - mainly conversions of their existing range. Most of the games were pretty dreadful even by the standards of the day!

They also had me write games for the Commodore 64 and Vic 20, in fact "Centropods" (a version of Centipede for the Vic 20 was probably my best game, it was a fair representation of the original game and was ran on an unexpanded Vic! (3.5k!)

*Meanwhile....*

A colleague of mine from the Architects office I used to work in, Kevin Moughtin, had been writing games for the PET and had quite a few published. He was also writing for the Commodore 64 and had left the office to set up in business on his own, writing games and some business software. After a few years with Rabbit, I was writing games based on arcade games, cunningly disguised to avoid copyright infringement. I wrote passable versions of Pacman, Frogger and a few others, and suggested that Kevin might be persuaded to produce Commodore 64 versions of these new games. As a result Kevin and I worked together for a few years.

*Back to Booty....*

Booty was designed by Rabbit and written by Kevin on the 64 and me on the Spectrum. So in fact it was pretty much a joint effort. I got most of the credit for the game because the Spectrum version sold so well. Booty was intended to be a full price game in three parts, swimming to the ship, collecting the treasure and getting the treasure back to the shore.

Unfortunately, while we were writing it the owner/manager of Rabbit died in rather tragic circumstances. The company continued trading for a while after his death but without his guidance they soon ceased trading.

Kevin and I were left with a half-finished game (and another that we called "Vortex" I think which was also marketed by Firebird.). We got Rabbit to sign the games over to us, as they had been giving us a nominal wage while we wrote it so really it could be argued that they owned it. We sent it around to various software companies to see if they were interested in marketing it. Parts one and two were more or less complete. For those of you who haven't seen part one, Jim swims through the sea collecting goldfish, avoiding other fish and has to rise to the surface now and again to replenish his air supply. Boats sail over the top preventing him from getting air if he doesn't time it right.

Needless to say "Firebird" was one, although it was a bit of a gamble on our part, trusting the game to a new company who wanted to sell it as a budget range game and pay us in royalties based on a percentage of the cost of the program. (Which didn't seem very much!)



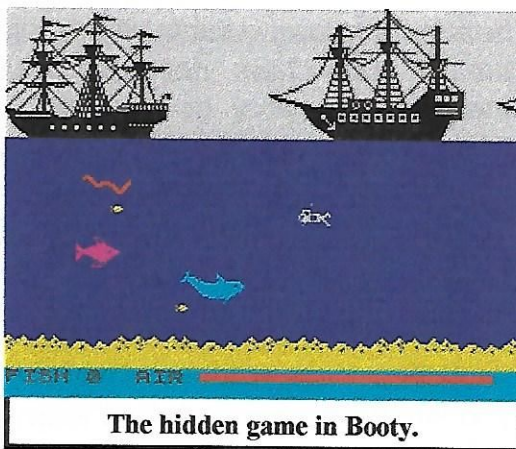
**How long did you take programming Booty, and why did part one end up as a hidden game, was that your idea?**

The program had taken about three months to write and it was another three before Firebird eventually released it. They wanted a few changes to the game, sadly Firebird didn't think much of the first part of the game, and as a budget release thought that the second part was good enough on its own. I have to admit that it wasn't my idea to have a "hidden game" in Booty, it was just a result of lazy programming! As the first part was already written, it was easier to just "jump" around the first bit of code rather than go through the program and delete the first game!

**Booty sold more than 100.000 copies. Did you ever think that it would become such a success?**

It was a pleasant surprise that Booty did so well, I don't think it was a great program but it was certainly the best of Firebird's initial budget range. They spent a lot on advertising their new company and as Booty was the best of their programs, it did very well and got very good reviews. Budget games at the time were pretty dreadful! I still have the gold cassette presented by Home Computing Weekly for selling over 100000 copies, (Kevin got one too.) It used to hang on my wall at home, but it was relegated into storage some years ago.

Following the success of Booty, I wrote various games for Melbourne House on the Spectrum and Amstrad, then eventually started working "with" Simon Price from the south of England. I say "with" because although we worked together for a couple of years, I only actually met him once! He was writing for the Commodore 64 and I was doing Spectrum versions of his games. This I found very educational! He has a computing degree and his programming was excellent! (Although very complicated to follow!) He was responsible for Wiz, Pulsoid and Pulse Warrior for Silhouette Software and I'm pretty sure he designed Super Dragon Slayer for Codemasters.



**The hidden game in Booty.**

Unfortunately, at the end of the 80's it was becoming increasingly difficult to get games published. Software companies were tending to take on "in-house" programmers, musicians and graphic artists and it was almost impossible for a one-man operator such as myself, to compete. Things weren't made easier by the stretch of water between the Isle of Man and England, as it was difficult to actually meet with people face to face and all my business had to be done by post or over the 'phone.

**Which of your 20 games released for the Spectrum do you think is the best game?**

Looking back it's impossible to say which I thought was my best Spectrum game - to be honest I can't even remember many of them! I had about 26 games marketed on various machines and remember writing to UK Gold with a CV and list of previous publications looking for work. They wrote back saying that they understood that all Rabbit's games came from the States and basically they didn't believe I'd written so many!

**Your last game on the Spectrum was Super Dragon Slayer: Expert Version for Codemasters in 1989. What happened after that?**

I drifted back into working for people wanting extensions and new buildings and eventually all my time was spent doing drawings, so I couldn't have given the time to programming even if someone wanted one. I eventually started working for a building company here on the island drawing on CAD, and I've been here for the past ten or eleven years.

**Do you still program, and what are your hobbies these days?**

I write very few programs these days, and certainly none for commercial use. The last was to try to crack the "Eternity Puzzle" - look it up on the internet if you haven't heard of it. - My program is very unlikely to succeed in winning the million pounds on offer though!

Other hobbies include going on vacation (three times a year if I can manage it!) I love theme parks - particularly those in the Orlando, Florida area. I make and sometimes perform magic tricks and illusions, and I go to the pub on most evenings! I'm also regional co-ordinator for the MX5 Owners Club (My little sports car). - Most of the rest of my spare time is spent playing with my computer and surfing the internet!

# SPECTRA

BY MILTON SNOOK

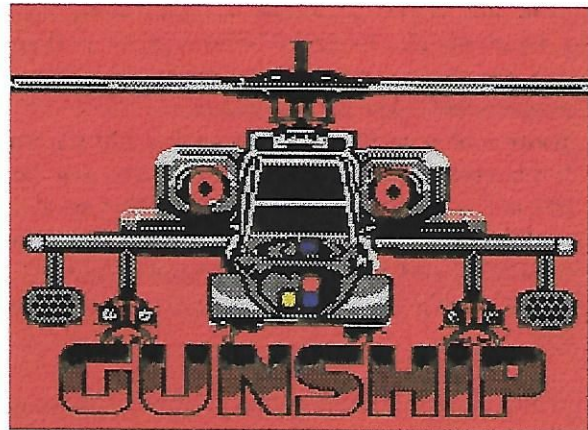
Yeah hi.

I hope you all had a shatteringly good Christmas and received an appropriate blast into 2001. Christmas may no longer be a time to look forward to the latest Speccy game appearing underneath the Christmas tree and remaining on your Speccy continuously for the next week creating some welcome heat as it snows outside. But it's still a time of great cheer, not least because there is little work or study or other such things to do. Unless you are an unfortunate little student with mid-session exams to revise for in which case I snigger in your general direction.

This issue, Spectra will bring you, as you will be flabbergasted to learn, absolutely nothing that was promised at the end of last issue. What an unreliable old pant I am. In a pathetic attempt to apologise to anyone who was expecting something different, may I offer a highly desirable Chesney Hawkes album. And there's nothing quite as good as a Chesney album, except perhaps everything. Just in case anyone actually still likes to own Speccy originals, I have oddly obtained 4 big box originals of Gunship by Microprose in the last few months. So, let's have a

## COMPETITION

The usual rules apply - if you know your name and address, send them to me or Mister Editor and I'll post off your game. A little bit of Spectra history has already been made with this competition as we have a winner! It's me. But



smack me up if we don't have a second winner as well! Mister Editor now also has a copy so you will have to bash up each other's Lego over the remaining two copies.

## TOP 10

### EASIEST SPECCY GAMES

1. Dan Dare 3
2. Rock Star Ate My Hamster
3. Double Dragon
4. Sinclair Chess
5. Spy Vs Spy 3
6. Out Run
7. Super Sprint
8. Hyperbowl
9. Chase HQ 2
10. Matchday



It's been many a long year since the last Speccy mags were available in our local newsagents. Luckily, this was not the death of the Speccy as had been feared. Many mail order zines rose from the ashes to keep us all entertained and provide our Speccy fix. Its surprising just how many zines there have been since 1993. And so, in an event that might even satisfy my list fetish, here is a summary of all those zines. When I say 'all', what I mean is

all those that I can remember (I've done a lot of research in my head). I have no idea about internet zines so that will have to be for another article. And being a British buffoon so unable to understand any languages other than English (apart from a really useful bit of Latin), only zines in English will appear below. To begin with a meaningless football phrase, let's get off and underway with:

### **ZAT**

One of the granddaddies of the zine scene. Very influential in showing what can be done with a Speccy zine. Darren Blackburn and the crew kept going into 1995 with over 30 issues produced. A good intelligence test in the title as well - one which I spectacularly failed by thinking it stood for a particularly nasty zit.

### **Z2**

The follow up zine created from the rubble of the defunct ZAT and Fish. Only lasted one issue probably because it was written by people that were not really interested in the Speccy anymore. Smelly whelks to them, then.

### **Adventure Probe**

Top marks to the adventure bible for still producing twelve 50-page issues per year. Now into its 14th year, this is the zine that will never be beaten for devotion to its subject. Always contains healthy Speccy coverage although other computers are mentioned.

### **Goblin Gazette**

I know nothing about this except that it was another multi-format adventure zine. If anyone has a spare copy, ping me the details.

### **Spellunkler**

The third adventure zine I know of and the sole Speccy-only one. Edited by James Waddington, there were sadly few issues but all well worth getting. Once he finished with this, he moved on to the even better.

### **Classix**

Probably the first of the new generation zines that didn't just copy the format of the original SU, YSs etc. Lots of decent well researched articles, cheap games for sale, information you didn't know and free chest nibblers. (Possibly.)

### **Outlet**

Mammoth electronic zine. Very technical and sophisticated and unfortunately a tad pricey. Perfect for someone who likes more than just games on their Speccy.

### **Speccy Classic**

Top notch e-zine produced by another Speccy hero Dave Fountain. Perhaps the most varied Speccy zine with articles from technical machine code to reviews to favourites charts. Looked great as it included many graphics taken from games - a trick surprisingly not copied by anyone else.

### **Crashed**

Sadly only just deceased (for ever?), this zine ran from 1994 and provided superb entertainment. Under four different editors in its time, you never quite knew what you would get next issue. Always good and of its time.

### **Fish**

An early zine that almost managed 10 issues. Mat Beal created probably the funniest Speccy zine ever, very much in the YS style. Bonus points for being produced on a Speccy.

### **Fish2**

Electronic version of Fish. Not nearly as good, not very long lasting, not enough screenshots and not enough Captain Caveman references. Still, the odd decent and funny article made it worth purchasing.

### **The Resistance**

I am not really sure that this was ever a zine at all. It was advertised in Fish and I got sent several pages of a zine trying to copy Fish. Might have been ok but much more effort was required.

### **Sinclair Express**

E-zine in the text only style of Fish2. Quite expensive and really quite crap. Even I only bought the first issue. Were the others? Both-ered.

### **Format**

Long running monthly zine that started well before 1993. The SAM took up more and more space and the Speccy articles were mainly about programming. Pretty good, if you like that sort of thing (not meant in a derogatory way but will probably come across like that.)

### **ZX Files**

Super duper indeed. Produced regular cover-tapes and had articles of all sorts inside. Many interviews, screenshots of rare games, details of the scene outside the UK and tons of other fantastic little dollops.

### **Spectrum UK**

Ok zine run by some dodgy dudes. Cheekily claimed to have 3,000 readers and suddenly stopped after obtaining lots of subscription money claiming family illness. Maybe they were being genuine, who knows?

### **PD Power**

Long running zine produced to go with the

owner's PD library. Interesting features were Linda Barker's column and an often decent covertape. Rumours persist that it has now finished.

#### **Alchnews**

Best mates with PD Power so must be mentioned next to them. E-zine with a brilliantly large amount of articles in each of its now 30-odd issues. Some good stuff for almost every feature of the Speccy. As with PD Power, a few too many slagging matches for some tastes.

#### **Thing Monthly**

Not really a Speccy zine at all but sometimes contained a Speccy section. The rest was funny and original - far more so than all these porno mags for wimps with bikini'd women on the covers that people buy "cos they're funny".

#### **DID**

Er, I think you may have some idea what this is. Lovely surprise to find the first issue fall through my letterbox. Consistently entertaining apart from some pillock called Milton.

#### **Frisbee User**

Old zine produced by prolific Speccy programming team the Shaw brothers. Contained almost solely game reviews so a bit limited. Basically provides a second opinion on hundreds of games.

#### **Speccy Belief / The Corner**

Not particularly great mag but worth getting as produced by an enthusiastic Speccy lover. Quite a small amount to read despite being A4.

#### **Relics**

Bit of an odd zine, this. Only about half of it was Speccy and the rest was anything from films to books. Only one issue was ever produced which was a shame as it was a worthwhile addition to the Speccy world.

#### **Retrogamer**

Several zines have appeared over recent years celebrating 1970s and 80s computers. This is the only one I will mention here as it is by far the best. About 25% is Speccy related. All of it is superbly detailed and lovingly researched - like it a lot.

#### **Hackers Hangout**

Again, sadly passed away recently. Covered the niche of tips, cheats and pokes better than any Speccy mag ever. Nothing much else was ever mentioned but always worth a read.

#### **8-bit**

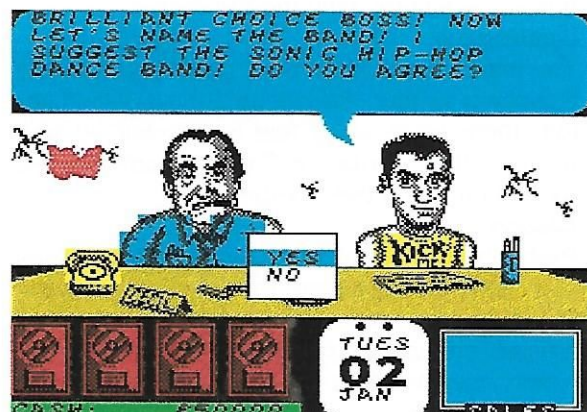
Different to the recent 'retro' zines due to being around well before them. A bit crap though, really. Best bit was lists containing contact details for Speccy related merchandise and people.

And that's just about it. If I remember any others (or anyone reminds me of any others), I'll list them in future issues. A final and special mention must go to Andy Davis. It was great to see that he has just produced a new Speccy zine. It is basically Alchnews on paper and is definitely worth getting. Nice one, Mr Davis. Does anyone else feel like copying him by launching a new zine? Go on geezers.

After all that text, what we need is a game with lots of pretty graphics to brighten up the place. It just so happens that one such game is also highly deserving of a mention in the Crap Games column.

## **CRAP GAMES**

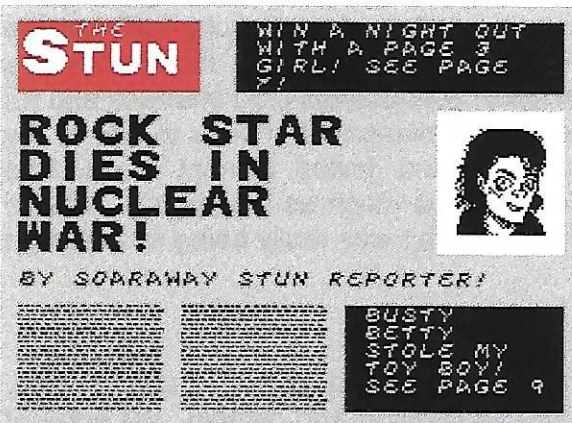
Hamsters and Rock Stars have a long and well documented association. It is often entirely for the benefit of the Rock Star and to the horror of the Hamster but I have never heard of a Rock Star eating a Hamster. Still, Rock Stars are such hilariously wacky people, as the Oasis nonces constantly demonstrate, that you could imagine one eating a Hamster. Anyway, its certainly a good name for a Speccy game.



This is a management game. You choose who you want to be in your band and then attempt to manage them to chart success. You have about 5

choices each week as to what to do. These include things like publicity stunts, promotion, practice and recording a single. Your input is therefore minimal and almost irrelevant. If you made random choices every week, it would make no difference. All you do is sit there and laugh a lot.

To be fair, the game is funny for two reasons. One is that the game is pure crap. The other is that it is intentionally quite funny at times. The members of your band are cartoon representations with silly names taking the mickey out of real pop stars, which makes a nice change. And the publicity stunts are also quite funny in a silly way - the title of the game is taken from one of these newspaper headlines.



As far as I can tell, there are only two ways to lose. Either you turn off in a fit of boredom or you do a publicity stunt which occasionally and randomly ends up killing your group. I must also give an honorary mention to the music. As the game is about music, it would be good to have some. Unfortunately, the 128K music is surely the worst in any Speccy game ever. It is just random notes played with dull sounds. When the game was released, the common consensus was that the music was great and that "you can hear your band getting better!" How wrong they were. The music is terrible and the band continues to play the same random notes no matter how much they practice.

Its crap of the highest order but at least there is some laughter to be had along the way.

Just enough time to say

## SHUT YOUR MOUTH

to C64 owners. No need to explain. Later.

saaange@yahoo.ie

## Desert Island Disks

The person sent to a deserted island in this issue is no other than David Raven aka Bitz. He's the winner of the Speccy Tour 2000. I'm sure some of you hope that he won't return in time to compete in the Speccy Tour 2001. I'm sure, he will. Over to you, David.

### 1. Doomdark's Revenge - Beyond Software

I played Lords Of Midnight when I was supposed to be sleeping, at midnight. I was given the usual C90 chock-full of games at school, and started going through the tape one night when I couldn't sleep. I had to cover the tiny speaker on the Speccy to stop the parent-ogres being alerted to my activities. I did not have a clue what was going on or what I was doing, and initially would keep hitting the 'night' key. Gradually I sorted the direction keys and could move around the land swelling my armies...but I did not know what to do or how to do it. So enamoured was I by the land of Midnight that I had to go and buy the game, and it changed my life. I played until I had destroyed the Ice Crown and, to this day, it is one of my finest Speccy achievements.

When Doomdark's Revenge came out I had to have it, and persuaded a friend in a

computer shop to bring it home on the day that they received it, a couple of days before it went on sale. Shareth the Heart Stealer had mine in minutes, and the Icemark had me captivated. It is so much more involved than Lords of Midnight and I did not have the time to devote to it to do it justice. I would love the chance to spend days on the beach just playing this game, and beating it would be better than being rescued!

## **2. Stack Up - Zeppelin**

I like games that tax the mind. Sometimes a little gem comes along that stretches the reflexes while it taxes that same mind. Of all the clones of the infamous Tetris, this (Stack Up!) is by far my favourite. I first played it this year, as it was included in the Speccy Tour 2000, and I think I held onto the high score all the way. It's one of those games where the pieces fall for you, or against you; there doesn't appear to be a happy medium. On the occasions that the fortunes smile in your favour, you can really progress to some fiendishly challenging levels. You have to keep your wits about you and concentrate on the playing field, especially when the pieces fall faster. This is one game that would certainly prevent the dulling of the senses for those stranded on a remote paradise isle.

## **3. Academy - CRL**

It's actually a toss-up between this and Tau Ceti, which is the predecessor of Academy. The scenario and objectives of TC are more mentally involving than the in-yer-face combat aspects of Academy, as there is more freedom to explore within the gameworld. Academy presents you with a set of linear missions of varying difficulty that test the range of combat skills needed for success. Academy probably wins the day as you choose when and where you fight, and the design of your combat craft interface and it's weaponry. It is this flexibility that introduces a superb element of chance to add to the dexterous demands of the defined, set objectives and limited combat arena. Like Doomdark's Revenge I was unable to play Academy as much as I wanted to, and so would love to tackle it properly. It almost makes me wish I was really being stranded on a lonely isle. Sniff.

## **4. Elite - Firebird**

It changed the world. Wing Commander and our Galileo Project have their roots in Elite, as do countless other games that involve space exploration and combat...yet none of them really seem to have captured the essence that *made* Elite. There is little depth to Elite; it is not over-complex. You buy stuff, go to another planet and sell it, fighting as you go if necessary. The path you choose can affect the way the galaxy treats you and it is the quest to find the balance of attitudes required to achieve Elite status. Myself, my brother and a friend would play this all night, each taking turns to fly from one station to another...and I would love to have it all to myself. Just me. Just. Me.

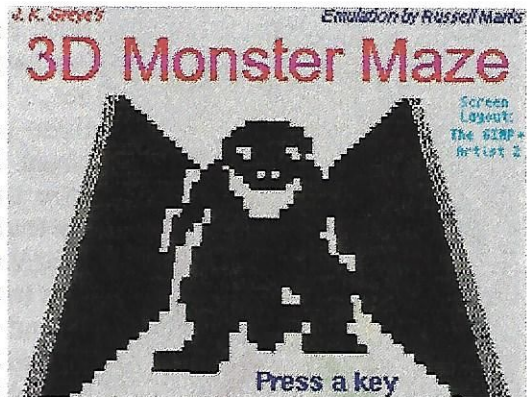
## **5. Boulder Dash - First Star Software**

Boulderdash is amongst the small group of games vying for number one status in my very own list of great games. Amongst others of this ilk, it will remain at the pinnacle forever. Simple in approach, fiendishly addictive and immensely challenging. Having this with a level-designer would be my idea of gaming heaven. There have been many attempts to bring it up-to-date, but each new attempt to improve the features that make it great just crumble, collapse and seep into oblivion. I have Boulderdash with me wherever I go be it under emulation or on GameBoy...and if I lost my copy when stranded, I would swim to civilisation, pop a copy in a plastic bag, and swim back to my island.

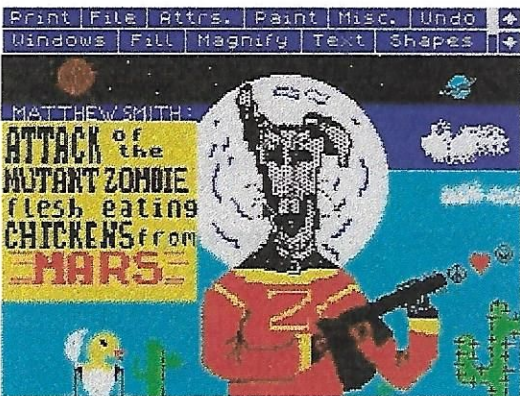
# Net Talk

By Michael Bruhn

What a fantastic title for a column, but I just couldn't come up with a better one. Anyway, in this new column I'll pass on all the interesting things I see and hear on the net, Speccy related of course. Some of this is taken from the Spectrum news groups comp.sys.sinclair and alt.binaries.comp.sinclair, the rest is from correspondence with other Speccy freaks from around the world. But let's start with this little gem I found on a.b.c.s.. Someone uploaded Russell Marks' Spectrum 128k translation of that great ZX81 game, 3D Monster Maze. This Spectrum version is not new, as it's from 1997, but I've never seen it before. How's that? Well, the problem is that Russell hasn't put it on the net. Therefore I suggested to him that I could put it on Desert Island Disks' website, and he agreed. Besides that he also sent me his Spectrum translation of Cornsoft's ZX81 game Frogger. These and all other games ever reviewed or mentioned here in the Fanzine can now be downloaded on our website. Just visit the Bits 'n' Pieces section. Enjoy.



What an interesting start, eh? Next up is something even more interesting. Steve Leyland uploaded the



unfinished loading screen to that unfinished Matthew Smith game 'Attack of the Mutant Zombie Flesh Eating Chickens from Mars'. Who would have thought that we would ever see that? Most of you have probably seen the inlay to the game, which is on Retrogamer's website. Keith Ainsworth (editor of Retrogamer), found it in a Charity shop. For the full story go to: <http://www.retrogamer.co.uk>.

Now this gave us all some hopes that there existed a few copies of the game. Well, I contacted Steve to ask if it was all right to print the screenshot in DID and he replied:

'Sure, feel free to print the loading screen. Although it was unfinished, it's probably all that survives from the game...although I did rescue a box of dusty tapes from

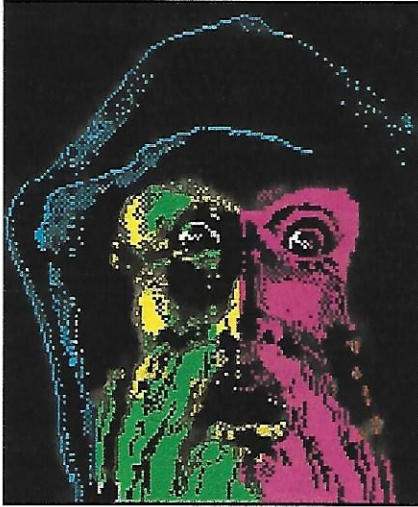
Matthew's attic (the house was being repossessed) after his disappearance, and kept them on the off-chance he might return and need them sometime. He turned up 3 years later on my doorstep destitute, and I put him up for a few months. When I gave him the rescued box, he said "source code". But I don't know if the code was AOTMZFEFCM or the "Footie" game he had been working on. Anyway they're back with Matt, so maybe one day he'll do something with them. I also have a copy of the inlay. Matt gave it to me, and that's what the loading screen was based on. Zappo was my dog, Zaphod (as in Beeblebrox of D. Adams fame) whom Matthew loved. I never actually saw the game itself running. It was definitely destined for the speccy, as that was the only machine I had at the time, but, alas after I had started the loading screen the game was shelved. I did not work for Software Projects, but was unemployed at the time, so volunteered to do it as a project to add to my CV.'

In another E-mail Steve told me: 'Unfortunately, the tape inlay was the only thing ever to be finished, Software Projects jumped the gun somewhat getting those printed, I seem to recall a full page ad in a speccy mag at the time too (can't remember which one).' All this concludes that the game was never released. Sad, really sad.

More interesting and sad news. The chances of ever seeing Great Giana Sisters on the Speccy are getting smaller and smaller. According to Greg Jackson, part of Source Software who did the Speccy version, the game was written using a PC-based assembler system by Andrew Glaister, and downloaded to Spectrums. So, they never actually used tapes. Greg also told that the game was finished, but the programmers never got a tape copy of the final product. The only chance now is the tapes sent to mags like Crash for reviews or previews. However, I fear those were kind of Demo tapes and not the full versions.

# Pokeworld

By Andy Ryals



Hello and welcome to the Strange Pokeworld of Andy Ryals. We have a different style again this time around. As you can see, I have trawled all over the Net and the Speccy world for these pokes, so thank your lucky stars. I mentioned that I would be doing something with the Czech games this Issue. After trawling the one website, I found virtually nothing, so the format changes. Here is our special WORLD OF SPECTRUM POKEWORLD SPECIAL! The idea being that the Speccy is all over the world, so here are some hacks for Speccy games from around the world. This poke column is the culmination of several months of work on and off. Hopefully it represents all the pokes for most of the new stuff that is available through all the various portals to Spectrum software on the net. Of course, loads of new stuff will be out by the time you read this but guess what? I will have hacked that as well :->

GAME	POKE	EFFECT	AUTHOUR	YEAR
<b>THE CZECH BIT</b>				
Fire	60793,183	Infinite lives	Fuxoft	1988
Perestroika	60205,x	x=lives	GCG	1991
Shoot Em Down	26979,0	Infinite live	?	?
	25019,x	x=lives		
Tetris 2	44940,x	x=player 1 lives	Fuxoft	1990
	45196,x	x=player 2 lives		
<b>THE AUSTRIAN BIT</b>				
Ultra Perfect	56576,x	x=mirrors found	Tigers Claw	1995
	56584,x	x=points		
	56572,x	x=starting mirrors		
	56570,x	x=starting mirrors		
<b>THE RUSSIAN BIT</b>				
Dizzy A	37798,0	Infinite lives	N-Discovery	2000
Kolobok Mutant Hero	39559,0	Infinite lives	Asphyxia	1998
Mario Islands (Demo)	30725,60	Infinite lives	Omega Hackers	1997
	29519,x	x=lives		
	29520,x	x=monsters		
	29521,x	x=coins		
	29523,x	x=time		
Mystery of Ancient Castle	29334,x	x=lives	Art Strudio	1996
Presidents Guard	29676,x	x=men	Inforcom	1997
Pyramid	38479,x	x=bombs	Visual Boys	1996
Smagly 1	27271,0	Infinite lives	Spectre Guys	1996
Tower Pod	38954,0	Infinite Lives	Studio Stall	1999
	38924,x	x=lives		
<b>THE UK BIT</b>				
Boid	59097,x	x=men	Your Sinclair	1992
	59147,x	x=time		
Kamikaze	28581,0	Infy lives	Codemasters	1990
KungFu Knights	47123,0	Infy lives	Firebird	1989
	36784,x	x=lives		
Pixy The Microdot 2	25946,x	x=lives	Your Sinclair	1992
Seymour Take One	48475,183	Inifnite Lives	Codemasters	1992
	40450,x	x=lives		
Super Seymour Saves the Planet	24344,x	x=level	Codemasters	1991
	24327,x	x=time		
	63872,0	Infinite lives		
	24339,x	x=lives		
Tiles v2.0	24188,x	x-tiles left	DJR	1993
	24182,x	x=seconds used		



GAME	POKE	EFFECT	AUTHOUR	YEAR
Weetabix v The Titches	28876,x 23832,x 28115,0 28104,0 28042,0	x=Level x=aliens Infinite Energy	Romik Software	1984
<b>THE SPANISH BIT</b> Lorna	64177,x	x=lives	Topo Soft	1990

### Hacking Comments

Welcome. Well we have trawled the Web for this Issue's Pokeworld. We have games from the old Czech Republic, Russia, Austria, Spain and the good old UK. I like Tiger's Claw so much that I downloaded all I could find. I can tell you now that all his other games that I could find on World of Spectrum are card games like Patience where there is nothing to hack.

I like the Russians because they keep producing lots of new software and, thanks to some new sites, I have some new Austrian and Czech software. I have also found a portal for Swedish software. Let's see what we can do from here. In Mario Islands a small smiley face says "crack me", so I did. Mario Islands checks to see if you fiddle the 'lives' counter. So I unfiddled it to get Inifnite Lives. Loved hacking Tiger's Claw, he releases some great stuff.

Every so often, you get the urge to hack the hell out of a game. I downloaded Smagly No.3 from WOS and came across a trio of Smagly games, some more dubious than others. The last Smagly was a different kettle of fish altogether. I LIKED THIS ONE. The demo is SOOOOooooooo long, so much Russian. The effects, especially the morphing, are some of the best EVER on the Speccy. So what about the game? Well it is VERY colourful and, check this, NO COLOUR CLASH!!!! A Mega game needs a Mega hack, so here we are. (Yet another cheesy link.)



### SMAGLY 3 - MEGAHACK

45452,x	x = time
62144,x	x = lives
62533,201	Infinite time
62474,0	Infinite energy
62149,0	Infinite lives

Pokes Usage: IMPORTANT PLEASE READ: those crafty little Russians have not made things that easy. When the game starts press the little red button. When the game is in action, AND NOT BEFORE, blast to your heart's content.

Dizzy A; now here is a game that was so much trouble that I nearly gave up! The original from WOS would not work on x128, so after trawling the Dizzy Webring, I managed to get a TRD, Z80 and SNA version (just to be completely safe :->). The game was hacked in 7, yes 7 seconds. I keep finding lots of new things to hack on the Spectrum which really does amuse me. I have now found two new Russian sites with lots of TR-DOS images. Watch out for these in the near future.

### +3 SPECIAL

It's ages ago since I hacked anything that was just purely +3 based. So whilst poking (phnarr) around several sites I found a .dsk image of a Codies game I have never heard of. Well I just had to poke it didn't I. Here are pokes for Wrestling Superstars written in 1992 for the Codies by some long forgotten coder.

POKE	EFFECT
58583,x	x=single seconds
58584,x	x=tens of seconds
58585,x	x=minutes
58639,0	Infinite time
58501,0	Infinite energy

Do you like that little lot? Well just take a butcher's at this next little bit. Remember the old multi pokes in Your Sinclair, Sinclair User, Crash etc.? Well DID has its own little one here. These are two brand new JSW games which I found on Andrew Broad's site, long may it live and there is a rumour that loads more games are on the way. Yippeee!

**JET SET WILLY – TIMEWARP / WILLY COMES HOME 128k ONLY**

```

01 REM JSW MEGAHACK
02 REM ANDY RYALS 31/7/2000
03 REM JET SET WILLY -TIMEWARP
04 REM WILLY COMES HOME
05 CLEAR 31999
30 REM LOAD "NOCACHE.BIN" CODE
32000: LET X= USR 32000: R
EM
Line 30 disabled, not
using +3 of +2A disc
40 LOAD "HILOAD.BIN" CODE 3200
0
42 LOAD "ROOMS.J56" CODE 32768
: POKE 32000,6: LET X= USR
32001
44 LOAD "ROOMS.J54" CODE 32768
: POKE 32000,4: LET X= USR
32001
50 LOAD "ROOMS.J53" CODE 32768
: POKE 32000,3: LET X= USR
32001
128 BASIC
50 LOAD "ROOMS.J51" CODE 32768
: POKE 32000,1: LET X= USR
32001
70 LOAD "ROOMS.J57" CODE 32768
: POKE 32000,7: POKE 32030,
27: LET X= USR 32001
80 LOAD "RTIME.J52" CODE 32768
81 LOAD "SONATA.TUN" CODE 5045
8: LOAD "GRACE.TUN" CODE 63
232: LOAD "TUNE.BIN" CODE 6
4000
90 REM PAUSE 200: REM
Line 90 can be deleted if
not loading from +3 disc
91 REM *****
92 REM * PUT YOUR POKES HERE *
93 REM *****
100 LET X= USR 33792
128 BASIC

```

This is a small hack which will load both games. As everyone now knows the game hacks for these two games I will not waste Michael's printing ink. Have fun chaps. STOP THE PRESS! These JSW/MM nuts have coded yet another game called JSW - Bulgarian Requiem. Here are some pokes to help you out:

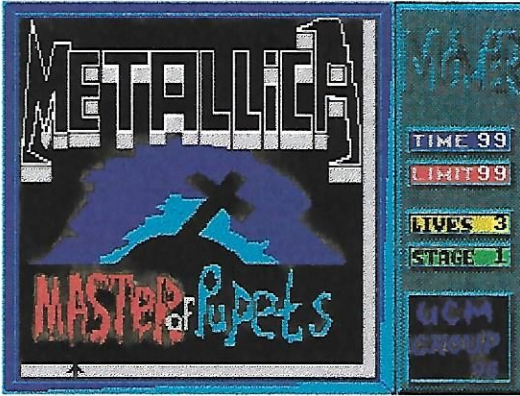
- 34172,x: 34173,x: 34174,x                    x = number of objects
- 34252,x    x = lives
- 34176,x: 34177,x: 34178,x: 34179,x        x = time

**THE RUSSIAN SPECIAL BIT**



I had this planned for another issue, but what the hell. I've hacked loads of stuff today so I thought we may as well have a hacking special. These hacks have been brought to you via a slightly souped up version of x128 with a few custom ROMS gleaned from the RAWWARSE website. Cheers lads! I now have multiface 3, and v6.04 TR-DOS running under the emulator. Hopefully I'll get the +D ROMS working soon. I hope you lot like what I have prepared. There is no special reason why I hacked any of these games. They were just there and needed hacking. Is that not reason enough?

GAME	POKE	EFFECT	AUTHOUR	YEAR
Boulderdash 5 & 6	23362,x	x=lives		
	23363,x	x=level		
	23413,x	x=time		
	23414,x	x=time		
	23418,x	x=diamonds collected		
Colour Lines 2	42635,x	x=time		
Figus 128	34941,x	x=time	Image Crew	1998
Fire Gear	23303,x	x=lives		
Gallows	25783,0	Infinite lives	Taras	2000
	27983,x	x=lives		
	34399,x	x=Retries		
Genius House	36070,x	x=time		
Heavy Metal Movers	23400,x	x=lives		
	23401,x	x=level		
	23402,x	x=limit moves		
	23404,x	x=lives		
Mainblow	30924,0	Infinite lives		
	51647,x	x=lives		
Soldiers v1.2	33564,x	x=soldiers	Alex Special	2000
ZX Windows Cobble II	38299,x	x=lives		



Russia is a wealth of talent for software development. The only thing I hate about the Russian scene is the number of puzzle games. Why? Looking through some of the games I hacked, Mainblow is an excellent Silkworm rip off. Figus, ZX Windows Cobble II, Colour Lines, Genius House are puzzle games, some better than others. A personal favourite is HEAVY METAL MOVERS, YEEAAHHH! I like this game being a mosher myself. I had great fun poking the level value to look at all the different album covers, some of them were really pants! Here is a screen shot.

REVIEW — REVIEW — REVIEW — REVIEW — REVIEW — REVIEW — REVIEW

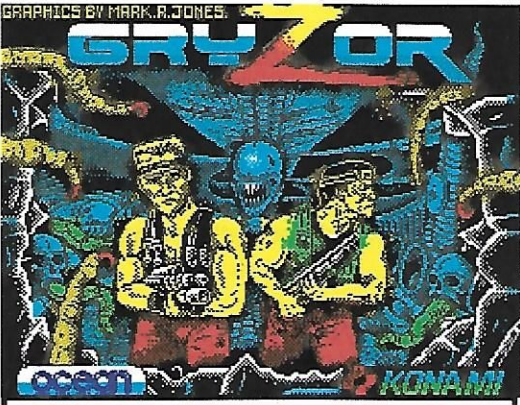
Game: Gryzor  
 Company: Ocean  
 Author: P. Owens & M. Jones  
 Released: 1986  
 Type: Arcade  
 Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair 2 & Cursor  
 Machine: 128K version reviewed.

Graphics	■■■■■■□□□□6
Sound	■■■■■■■■■■□□8
Playability	■■■■■■■□□□J 7/K 6
Addictiveness	■■■■■■■■■■□□8
Overall	■■■■■■■■□□□7

“My most favourite Speccy game ever” was the phrase I once used to declare nationwide, my love for Gryzor. These days, those words may seem a bit mis-placed, but one thing that cannot be denied was the impact it had on me when I first played it.

Originally when I played the split-load 48k version with arguably the most funky menu music ever, it was a laugh, but when I got a +2A for Christmas in '89, I spent the majority of Christmas Day, sitting in my bedroom playing the 128 version. I was saddened by the lack of graphical enhancements, but marvelled at the enhanced sound and the fact that it loaded in one go. Even though I never finished it until a good few years later, the memory of that first day of 128k power is pure nostalgia.

So, after scratching around for an idea for this review, the idea to take a look at this very underrated legend came into my head. It's also one of the few games that I can do a review from memory alone.



“An arcade nightmare for your home micro.”

The game uses what is now a very tried and true scenario—you against the whole alien army, and you better win...or else! So many shooters use this, but what sets the good ones from the others can be decided on a number of things. Gryzor was noticable for it's ‘grab ya by da throat’ attitude and marketing; Schwarzenegger’s body from Predator, with a handsome young man’s face, accompanied with an equally imposing dark haired friend, in an Alien ‘style’ background. “An arcade nightmare for your home micro” was the slogan. That poster, even now, still has a place on my bedroom wall, to this day!

Load up the game, and you're into the action straight away. Running along a multi-level section, you can shoot in a good number of directions, hop down to, or jump up to levels to avoid the enemies and gunfire. With a jab on the space bar, our hero would jump up and summersault three/ maybe four times, shoot the guys on the level above, avoid seven enemy bullets and land on his feet. No wonder I wanted to be like him (I was only about 12, 13 at the time!).

Get to the second section, and you enter a 3D maze, which won't allow you to progress through each bit of the maze, until you destroy a sensor at the far end. You have to content with electric fields, rolling bars coming at you, and enemies running out, shooting at you, then running away again. Oh-and there's a time limit, too.

The third section is structured like a summit, with you jumping up through the section, again defeating everything in your way. This is tricky, because you need to know exactly where and when to jump. If you get it wrong and miss a platform, it's a long way down.

The fourth section is a repeat of the second, and the final section is a repeat of the first, only much, much longer, and harder. This is by far the best level, and has arguably one of the best moments in Speccy history, when our hero summersaults from the top platform, 100 feet down into water, where he continues to fight along the sea bed. He doesn't even come up for air! Get this jump right, and you can take out the bad guys in the water, and avoid their gunfire...in 'mid free-fall' (as it were)!

You've still got to deal with gun emplacements, huge robots bowling hot stuff at you, electric platforms which will fry you on sight, huge aliens with aggressive offspring, and the toughest, most vicious cotton balls in history (and I'm not even joking). Granted, the bad guy at the end is a bit of a let down, but if you manage to beat it, and finish the game, self-satisfaction should be enough, unlike the lame little 'congrats' message.

Graphically, it's aged. Generally monochrome except for the first level, the sprites certainly still move smoothly, though there's some dodgy collision detection at times (I've noticed it in the jumps). Sound is still very good. Gunshots and music, all as good as it was when I first heard them. But the gameplay is what's it's all about. It's just straight forward 'shoot everything that moves'. These games can be perceived as brain-dead or monotonous, but only if they do not stir your instincts, keep you on the edge of your seat. But when they do all of the above, get ready for an experience it's own right.

The Nemesis trilogy in the arcades, Thunderforce 4 on the Megadrive, and Gryzor on the Speccy, remain as my favourites of the genre, and though time hasn't been kind to the 'G', it remains as a shining example of how to do a good old fashion shoot em up. Thanks for the memories....

*John McIntosh*



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